

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claim 1 has been amended to change the term "obtainable" to "obtained".

The rejection of claims 1-9 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, is thus deemed to be overcome.

Claim 1 has been further amended to recite that the latex is obtained by emulsion polymerization in the presence of the alkyl benzene sulfonate and a redox polymerization initiator containing no transition metal salt. This is supported by claim 4, which has been cancelled. This feature is one of the characteristics of the invention and provides colorless products.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by GB 1480112. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed as applied to the claims after the foregoing amendments.

The reference GB 1480112 discloses the production of latex from a monomer mixture in the presence of alkyl benzene sulfonate and a molded product from the latex. However, the reference does not disclose an "alkyl benzene sulfonate containing at least 10 weight % of C₁₃₋₂₀ alkyl benzene sulfonate and a redox polymerization initiator containing no transition metal salt" as essential components. In all the working Examples of the reference, iron (II) sulphate (ferrous sulfate), which is a transition metal salt, is used as a redox polymerization initiator (see page 3, line 108 and page 4, line 44) and sodium dodecylbenzene sulfonate as a emulsifying agent.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 are also rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,492,446. This ground of rejection is also respectfully traversed as applied to the claims after the foregoing amendments.

The cited reference U.S. Patent 6,492,446 B1 discloses the production of latex from a monomer mixture composition by the use of alkyl benzene sulfonate with C₁₃₋₂₀ alkyl group and a redox polymerization initiator. However, the reference fails to disclose any polymerization reaction using a redox polymerization initiator containing no transition metal salts. In fact, all the

polymerization reactions in the working example of the reference are conducted in the presence of ferrous sulfate, which is one of the transition metal salts (see column 14, lines 26-27 and column 18, line 33).

As stated in the present specification, from page 12, penultimate line 2 to page 13, line 3, the use of transition metal salts is inferior in coloration and smell of the molded products. Table 2 of the present specification shows that, in Example 9, ferrous sulfate is used as a redox agent, and in Example 10, cuprous naphthenate is used as a redox agent. In studying Table 3, it can be seen that the outward appearance (coloration) of the molded products in Examples 9 and 10 is inferior to those of other Examples produced by the use of redox polymerization initiators having no transition metal salts according to this invention.

Comparative Example 1 of the present application uses B-60 Na (alkyl benzene sulfonates with C₁₂ alkyl) as an emulsifying agent and does not use any alkyl benzene sulfonates having C₁₃ or more alkyl. The molded product of Comparative Example 1 is inferior in shrink and stickiness resistance (see Table 3).

As shown above, and as clearly demonstrated in the Examples of the present specification, molded products obtained from the latex prepared by the use of redox polymerization initiator containing no transition metal salt and the alkyl benzene sulfonate containing at least 10 weight % of C₁₃₋₂₀ alkyl benzene sulfonate are excellent in non-coloration, soft feeling and stickiness resistance of the products compared with those obtained from the latex containing transition metal salts as a polymerization initiators or without use of alkyl benzene sulfonates with C₁₃ or more alkyl group.

The present invention, which achieves such an excellent properties in the molded products, is not disclosed or suggested in the references cited by the Examiner. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention is new and unobvious from the references.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and allowance is solicited.

Upon allowance of claims 1-3 and 5-9, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the restriction requirement and allow claims 10-11.

Respectfully submitted,

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